

# City of Fresno - Airports

**Updated May 2004**

The Fresno Yosemite International Airport (Airport) is owned and operated by the City of Fresno. The Airport is located approximately six air miles northeast of the downtown area of the city of Fresno. The primary air trade area consists of the Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area. The Airport also serves the six-county region comprising the Central San Joaquin Valley. The Fresno-Clovis Metropolitan Area is the largest urban area and the principal business center in the Central San Joaquin Valley Region. Fresno Yosemite International Airport is the only major air carrier airport in the Central Valley.

The airport facilities consist of the runway/taxiway complex, including safety and approach protection areas; the airline terminal complex, including the terminal, baggage claim, and concourse, aircraft boarding aprons, access and service roadway systems, parking areas and ancillary facilities; airport support facilities, including a control tower, maintenance building, airport safety and security station, and administration building; general aviation areas, including hangar buildings, maintenance shops and service facilities for general aviation aircraft; government facilities for military aviation activities; as well as properties for commercial, industrial and recreational uses permitted on an interim basis only, for buffering purposes until required for airport expansion. FYI is located on 2,300 acres with a 97,000 sq. ft. passenger terminal. The Airport has a 24-hour Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airport traffic control tower and terminal approach control facility.

The Airport has two runways. The primary runway, 29R-11L, is 9,222 feet in length and 150 feet in width with 1,000 and 850 foot stopway areas respectively. This runway, together with its associated taxiways, can accommodate any type of aircraft in service today and has been designed in accordance with FAA criteria for future generations of aircraft. Should the need arise, this runway can be extended to 10,000 feet on property within the present boundaries of the Airport. Runway 29R- 11L is equipped with an instrument landing system, high-intensity strobe approach light lane, high-intensity runway edge, centerline, and touchdown zone lights, runway end identification lights, and visual approach slope indicators. Effective in November 2000, a Category II landing system was commissioned, with a further upgrade to Category IIIB completed January 28, 2001. This improved system allows qualified pilots operating appropriately equipped aircraft a lower decision height for landing, a major advantage in dealing with the Valley's seasonal tule fog.

There is a parallel runway, 29L-11R, 7,206 feet in length and 100 feet in width, for use by smaller, lower-performance aircraft and commuter aircraft. This runway is also lighted, has runway end identification lights and non-precision instrument approach capability.

The passenger terminal facilities consist primarily of terminal, baggage claim, and concourse buildings together with associated aircraft boarding aprons, access and service roadway systems and parking areas. The terminal building, completed in 1962 and remodeled in 1993, covers approximately 45,000 sq. ft. It contains airline ticket counters, baggage handling areas, administrative offices, restaurant, cocktail lounge, gift shop, barbershop, video arcade, travel agency, and other passenger services. The concourse building, completed in 1962 and remodeled in 1978 and in 1997, also contains approximately 45,000 sq. ft. The primary concourse facilities include passenger boarding lounges, security areas, airline offices, a snack bar, cocktail lounge, espresso bar, and gift shop. The terminal complex also includes a separate building for air cargo and related activities. The enclosed baggage claim facility was completed in 1988 and comprises an area of 7,629 sq.ft and includes car rental counters and two baggage carousels.

A major upgrade of the concourse facilities began in August 2000 with demolition of the last portion of the old concourse, without causing significant disruptions to travel routines. The entryway was moved to the corner of McKinley and Peach to align with the planned freeway 180 extension. The new entry opened April 25, 2001. It doubled available parking to 2,200 spaces and allowed Airports to resurface the old lot, adding three additional access lanes in front of the terminal, and countless other upgrades to land-side facilities. The new two-level concourse, opened late fall 2002, includes four passenger loading bridges, expanded food court, Internet-access business center and a children's play area. The expansion costs of approximately \$55 million for both airside/landside and concourse were funded through a combination of retained earnings, Passenger Facility Charges (PFC), and FAA Airport Improvement Program grants for eligible portions of the work.

Fresno is currently served by one major air carrier and four regional air carriers providing jet service to major destinations and connecting hubs, together with two commuter airlines providing service to other significant secondary markets. The certificated carriers currently providing service at Fresno include the following:

*American Airlines*, whose daily schedule includes three MD-80 jets to its hub at Dallas/Ft Worth. Connecting service to virtually any point is available from this hub airport, including international destinations.

*America West Express*, five regional jets daily to Phoenix (a growing connection hub), and one daily jet to Las Vegas.

*Horizon Air*, three daily regional jets to Seattle (a major international connection) and one daily jet to Portland.

*SkyWest/Delta Connection*, four regional jets daily to Salt Lake City.

*SkyWest/United Express*, four regional jets daily to Denver, one regional jet daily to San Francisco and two regional jets daily to Los Angeles.

*Allegiant Air*, one MD-87 jet daily to Las Vegas.

The two commuter airlines currently providing service at Fresno are *American Eagle* and *SkyWest/United Express*. Altogether, these two carriers operate 24 daily departures with 720 seats to direct service points including Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Palm Springs and San Francisco.

The 49 daily departures can accommodate in excess of 2,300 business and leisure passengers (or 4,600 seats departing and arriving) to a variety of critical hubs throughout the nation.

The following table shows the number of airline passengers using the airport terminal facilities from 1993 through 2003.

| <b>TOTAL ARRIVING AND DEPARTING PASSENGERS</b> |                       |                       |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Majors</b>                                  | <b>1993</b>           | <b>1994</b>           | <b>1995</b>           | <b>1996</b>             | <b>1997</b>             | <b>1998</b>           | <b>1999</b>             | <b>2000</b>             | <b>2001</b>           | <b>2002</b>             | <b>2003</b>             |
| Enplaned                                       | 234,708               | 220,006               | 146,630               | 207,335                 | 135,760                 | 89,734                | 83,851                  | 84,711                  | 80,739                | 107,679                 | 276,244                 |
| Deplaned                                       | 228,047               | 209,576               | 140,039               | 195,088                 | 131,875                 | 88,951                | 79,346                  | 81,305                  | 76,524                | 108,345                 | 273,981                 |
| Sub Total                                      | <u>462,755</u>        | <u>429,582</u>        | <u>286,669</u>        | <u>402,423</u>          | <u>267,635</u>          | <u>178,685</u>        | <u>163,197</u>          | <u>166,016</u>          | <u>157,263</u>        | <u>216,024</u>          | <u>550,225</u>          |
|  |                       |                       |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |
| <b>Commuters</b>                               |                       |                       |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |
| Enplaned                                       | 227,885               | 269,391               | 302,575               | 327,397                 | 371,145                 | 379,826               | 415,783                 | 413,483                 | 387,042               | 396,752                 | 240,513                 |
| Deplaned                                       | 227,711               | 268,670               | 301,709               | 625,397                 | 368,765                 | 377,569               | 417,280                 | 410,512                 | 392,076               | 395,147                 | 243,479                 |
| Sub Total                                      | <u>455,596</u>        | <u>538,061</u>        | <u>604,284</u>        | <u>652,794</u>          | <u>739,910</u>          | <u>757,395</u>        | <u>833,063</u>          | <u>823,995</u>          | <u>779,118</u>        | <u>791,899</u>          | <u>483,992</u>          |
|  |                       |                       |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |
| <b>Charter</b>                                 | <u>12,217</u>         | <u>11,716</u>         | <u>48,626</u>         | <u>51,547</u>           | <u>11,317</u>           | <u>30,061</u>         | <u>40,543</u>           | <u>22,075</u>           | <u>6,734</u>          | <u>6,732</u>            | <u>3,946</u>            |
|  |                       |                       |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |                       |                         |                         |
| <b>Total Pax</b>                               | <b><u>930,568</u></b> | <b><u>979,359</u></b> | <b><u>939,579</u></b> | <b><u>1,106,474</u></b> | <b><u>1,018,862</u></b> | <b><u>966,141</u></b> | <b><u>1,036,803</u></b> | <b><u>1,012,086</u></b> | <b><u>943,115</u></b> | <b><u>1,014,655</u></b> | <b><u>1,038,163</u></b> |

Airport management works closely with established and new carriers to increase service to and from Fresno. The airline industry is striving toward greater efficiency by focusing on longer routes. This has created an opportunity for the regional and new carriers to move into markets such as Fresno and tap the 2 million population base located within the six-county region. Commuters like SkyWest/United Express and American Eagle have been successful in capturing this market.

The Airport is also home to a large number of general aviation activities. At present, there are more than 200 corporate and privately owned aircraft based at the Airport. A large proportion of these are high performance business jets and multi engine aircraft. There are three (3) major Fixed Base Operators: Corporate Aircraft, Central California Aviation, and Mercury Air Center. Together with their subtenants, they offer a wide range of service including aircraft sales, fueling, service, repair, maintenance, aircraft hangar

storage, tie down facilities, air taxi and charter, flight instruction, etc. There are also a number of corporate tenants who have their own facilities and one to support helicopter operations. Both the U.S. Forest Service and the California Department of Forestry operate an Air Attack Base at the Airport for fighting forest fires with aerial tankers. The California Highway Patrol, Fresno County Sheriff, and Fresno Police maintain flight facilities for helicopter and fixed-wing operations.

The Airport is home to three (3) military aviation activities. The largest is the California Air National Guard which maintains its headquarters for the 144th Fighter Wing and five subsidiary air defense command units which operate F-16 aircraft. The California Army National Guard maintains an Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot (AVCRAD) at the Airport. The mission of this unit is to perform high level maintenance and repair on Army aircraft. Its jurisdiction covers a 15-state region in the Western United States. The U.S. Marine Corps Reserve maintains an air defense activity on the field.

### ***Management Discussion and Analysis***

The Fresno Yosemite International Airport is a municipally owned entity operating as a self-supporting enterprise. Revenue collected with respect to the Fresno Yosemite International Airport may only be used for Airport purposes. Occasionally there are fluctuations in revenues collected. These are often attributed to a large sale of equipment, collection of an outstanding debt, or an increase in fees. Over the past fourteen years (FY 1989 through FY 2003), revenue sources have remained constant. Airport costs are purposely kept competitive with other comparably sized airports in the west coast region. FYI makes every effort to keep rates and charges competitively priced; maintaining costs to airlines in the lowest quartile for airports our size.

Airport staff actively works with the air carriers serving its market in an attempt to ensure that the needs of Fresno's citizens and business community are adequately served. A cooperative effort between Airport Administration and the Fresno Chamber of Commerce supports air service development, tasked to aggressively seek expanded service from new and existing carriers. This group has identified, and is attempting to mitigate, what it terms the "leakage" factor (i.e., a certain percentage of passengers in the San Joaquin Valley driving to large markets to take advantage of low-cost carriers or carriers offering non-stop jet service). In response to this factor, a marketing strategy called "*Fly Fresno*" was developed. The Fly Fresno campaign targets not only the citizens and businesses in Fresno, but also travel agents, the Official Airlines Guide, car rental companies and, because of the City's proximity to three National Parks, the National Park Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Staff focus on air service development, and have met with many carriers who could serve Fresno's market by incorporating FYI into their route structure.

### **Fresno Chandler Executive Airport**

The Fresno Chandler Executive Airport ("*Chandler*"), located near downtown Fresno, is also owned and operated by the City of Fresno. Since 1948, when airline operations were transferred to the Fresno Yosemite International Airport (then called Fresno Air Terminal at Hammer Field), Chandler's role has been to serve regional general aviation needs. Chandler is located near downtown Fresno on 140 acres. During the early 1970's, the FAA designated Chandler as a reliever airport to the Fresno Yosemite International Airport as part of the National Airspace System Plan. Chandler is also classified as with a B-1 Airport Reference Code which means it is designed to handle 95% of all general aviation aircraft weighing less than 12,500 pounds.

In recent years, the City has proceeded with several capital improvements at Chandler in order to enhance its role as a reliever general aviation airport. Improvements include, but are not limited to, the relocation of landing thresholds on runways, causing aircraft to overfly residential areas at higher altitudes; storm drainage improvements to enhance flood control; the installation of a precision approach path indicator to enhance landing approach safety; the installation of an automated weather observation system; construction of additional hangars; and runway and taxiway pavement resurfacing. Chandler is also home to a popular home-style restaurant housed in the art deco inspired terminal lobby.

## Airport Management

**Russell Widmar, AAE** leads the City of Fresno Airports Division as **Director of Aviation**. Within that Division is Fresno Yosemite International Airport, the commercial airport serving over one million passengers, and Fresno Chandler Executive Airport, the general aviation feeder airport supporting 3,500+ monthly aircraft operations. Prior to taking the director's position in Fresno in 2004, Mr. Widmar served as Director of Kansas City International Airport and Executive Director of Salt Lake City International Airports. With a thirty year history in aviation, Widmar is an Accredited Airport Executive through the American Association of Airport Executives and serves as a Board Member for Airports Council International – North America. Qualified as a commercial pilot, Widmar holds a Master of Arts Degree in Management from Claremont Graduate University, and a Bachelors Degree in Economics from California State University at Northridge.

**Daniel F. Card** holds responsibilities at both Fresno Yosemite International Airport and Fresno Chandler Executive Airport; overseeing property development at both airports. As **Deputy Director of Administration and Superintendent of Fresno Chandler Executive Airport**, Mr. Card concentrates on developing support within the community, underscoring the economic contribution of general aviation. Mr. Card has more than 25 years of management and leadership experience. In 1984 as General Manager for the Voyager Aircraft Inc., Mr. Card recruited, trained and managed a diverse staff. His financial/budget management, fund raising and product development both foreign and domestic was an integral part of the success of the Voyager project that was awarded the Collier Trophy (modern aviation's highest honor). Mr. Card worked 26 years with the National Park Service. During that time he was credited with efficient program development, concise financial planning, innovative personnel management, clear communication, and writing and winning more than \$250,000 in special grant funding. A participating member of various aviation organizations, Mr. Card is an active licensed commercial pilot of 30 years and a FAA licensed aircraft mechanic. He earned a Master of Science Public Administration, at George Williams College, Chicago and a Bachelor of Science Public Administration, at Clemson University, South Carolina. Mr. Card is a certified Franklin Covey Trainer.

**Matthew M. Van Valkenburgh, AAE, Airport Operations Manager**, is responsible for airport public safety, airfield operations, airport maintenance, capital improvements and environmental issues at Fresno Yosemite International Airport. A retired naval officer, Mr. Van Valkenburgh has more than 25 years leadership and management experience in aviation organizations. He has coordinated airfield operations, negotiated airline and cargo agreements, performed property management functions, managed environmental programs, and developed managerial training programs at the El Paso International Airport, Anchorage International Airport, and various military facilities. Prior to coming to Fresno, he was the Aviation Program Manager for the Denver Regional Council of Governments coordinating aviation planning and programming for airports within an eight county region. He is an experienced public speaker. As a part-time faculty member, he teaches aeronautics at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and management courses at the University of Phoenix. Mr. Van Valkenburgh has logged over 4,000 flight hours in civilian and military aircraft. He earned a Master of Aeronautical Science degree at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and is an Accredited Airport Executive (AAE), a professional credential of the Association of American Airport Executives.